

7. Excavation collapse

A **57-year-old** construction worker died when he was covered by soil when a bank collapsed. The victim's employer was subcontracted to demolish standing walls of an equalization basin at a water treatment facility. Several months previously the east wall of the basin had separated from the north, south, and baffle walls, leaving extensive damage to the structure. When the concrete walls were demolished, only the earthen walls were left standing. The earthen walls were not sloped, shored, braced or protected; the upper earthen wall had a bench installed but it was not to proper standards. The victim was cutting the rebar that had tied into the foundation of the equalization basin and into the back concrete wall so that the removal of the foundation could be started. As he was doing so a large section of the earthen wall sheared off above him and covered him with soil. He died from the injuries he sustained.

Citations as Originally Issued

Citation 1

Item 1a 1926.651(j)(1)	Adequate protection was not provided to protect employees from loose rock or soil that could pose a hazard by falling or rolling from an excavation face in that such protection did not consist of scaling to remove loose material; installation of protective barricades at intervals as necessary on the face to stop and contain falling material; or other means that provide equivalent protection
Item 1b 1926.652(a)(1)	Each employee in an excavation was not protected from cave-ins by an adequate protective system designed in accordance with TOSHA standards in 29 CFR 1926.652.
Item 2 1926.651(k)(1)	Daily inspections of excavations, the adjacent areas, and protective systems were not made by a competent person for evidence of a situation that could result in possible cave-ins, indications of failure of protective systems, hazardous atmospheres, or other hazardous conditions.

